I CLAIM:

1. A method of delivering a component to the colon of an animal comprising:

coating the component with a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate; and

orally administering the coated component to the animal.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructan.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the fructan has an average degree of polymerization in the approximate range of 2 to 60.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the fructan has an average degree of polymerization in the approximate range of 2 to 20.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein the fructan has an average degree of polymerization in the approximate range of 2 to 10.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructo-oligosaccharide.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is neosugar.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the component is one or more of a mineral, vitamin, drug, bacteria, yeast, immune stimulator, nutrient, nutraceutical, electrolyte, chelated mineral, mold, enzyme, energy-providing compound, antibody, or acid.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the component is bacteria from the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacterium*.

10. The method of claim 8 wherein the component is a nutraceutical.

11. The method of claim 8 wherein the component is an enzyme.

12. The method of claim 8 wherein the component is an immune stimulator.

13. The method of claim 8 wherein the component is a drug.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is utilized as an energy source by *Bifidobacterium* species, but not by *Salmonella* species.

15. The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is utilized as an energy source by *Lactobacillus* species, but not by *Escherichia coli*.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein the coating step comprises applying powdered fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate with a liquid to form a thin film coating on the component.

17. The method of claim 16 further comprising repeating the step of applying the powdered fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and liquid to achieve a multi-layered coating.

18. The method of claim 1 wherein the coating step comprises combining the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate with a liquid to form a mixture and atomizing and spraying the mixture on the component to form a thin film coating on the component.

19. The method of claim 18 further comprising repeating the step of applying the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and liquid mixture to achieve a multi-layered coating.

20. The method of claim 1 comprising coating the component with fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and one or more flavoring agent.

21. The method of claim 1 wherein the component is a bacteria.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein the bacteria is from the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacteria*.

23. A coated component made in accordance with the method of claim 1.

24. A method of delivering a component to the colon of an animal comprising:
coating the component with one or more prebiotics; and
orally administering the coated component to the animal.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein the prebiotic is a fructose-based oligosaccharide, peptide, protein, or lipid that is not digested or absorbed in a stomach or small intestine, but is fermented by bacteria present in the colon.

26. The method of claim 24 comprising coating the component with a mixture of two or more prebiotics.

27. The method of claim 26 wherein one of the prebiotics is fructo-oligosaccharide.

28. The method of claim 24 comprising coating the component with a mixture of one or more prebiotic and one or more flavoring agent.

29. The method of claim 24 wherein the component is one or more of a mineral, vitamin, drug, bacteria, yeast, immune stimulator, nutrient, nutraceutical, electrolyte, chelated mineral, mold, enzyme, energy-providing compound, antibody, or acid.

30. A composition for colon-targeted delivery comprising:
one or more components to be delivered to the colon; and

a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate coating surrounding the component.

31. The composition of claim 30 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructo-oligosaccharide.

32. The composition of claim 30 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is inulin.

33. The composition of claim 30 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is neosugar.

34. The composition of claim 30 wherein the coating further comprises a flavor enhancing agent.

35. The composition of claim 30 wherein the component is one or more of a mineral, vitamin, drug, bacteria, yeast, immune stimulator, nutrient, nutraceutical, electrolyte, chelated mineral, mold, enzyme, energy-providing compound, antibody, or acid.

36. The composition of claim 35 wherein the component is one or more beneficial bacteria from the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacteria*.

37. A composition for colon-targeted delivery comprising:

one or more components to be delivered to the colon; and

a coating of one or more prebiotics surrounding the component, wherein at least one of the prebiotics is a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate.

38. A method of masking the flavor of a component to be administered orally to an animal comprising coating the component with combination of a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and a flavoring agent.

39. The method of claim 38 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructo-oligosaccharide, inulin, or neosugar.

40. A method of enhancing the flowability of a component comprising coating the component with a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate.

41. The method of claim 40 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructo-oligosaccharide, inulin, or neosugar.